

City Attorney

Mission Statement

The mission of the Office of the Saint Paul City Attorney is to fulfill its duty to represent the City in its legal affairs with integrity, professionalism, and collegiality.

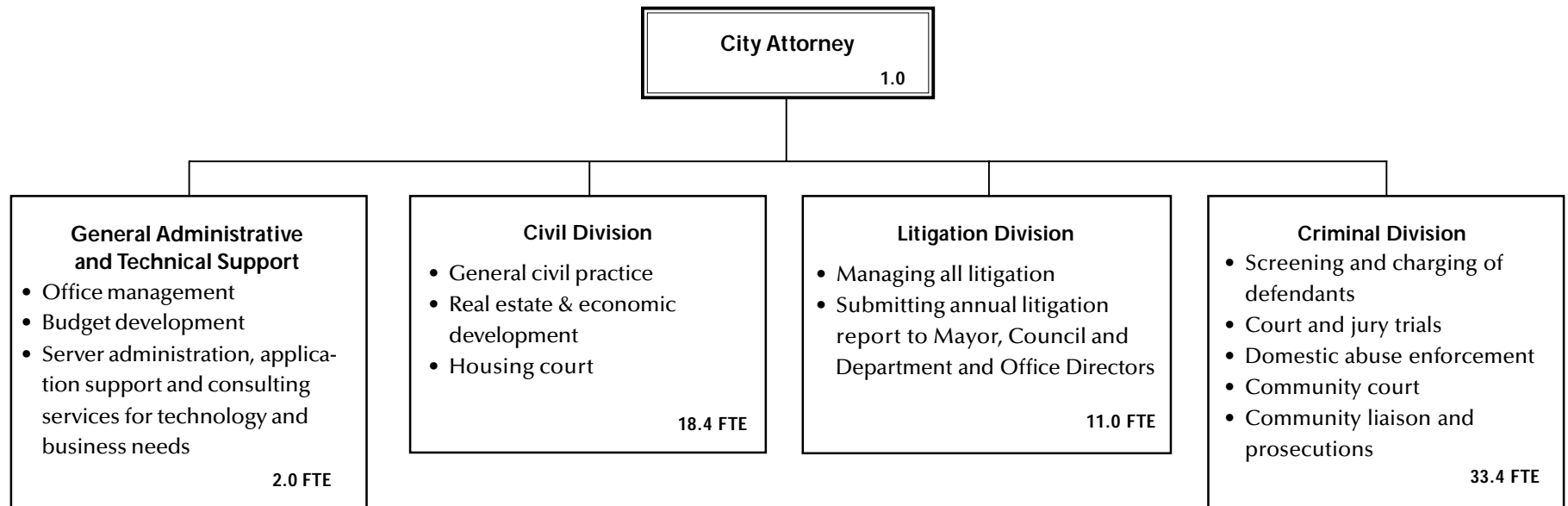
Integrity means that we are loyal to the interests of the City and the laws under which it functions.

Professionalism means that we are thorough and creative in representing the interests of the City, respectful of the public process in which we function, and courteous to all those with whom we interact.

Collegiality means working together, and with the elected and appointed officials of the City, to continuously seek improvements to the quality of legal services and the efficiency with which they are provided.

City Attorney's Office

(Total 65.8 FTEs)



Strategic Plan Accomplishments and 2004 Priorities

Major Accomplishments

- The Civil Division continues to provide outstanding legal services to the Mayor, City Council, and City departments on housing, development, licensing, zoning, labor, and other governmental operations.
- The Criminal Division staff handled 18,842 cases in 2002 and is expecting to handle approximately 19,807 in 2003.
- The Criminal Division staff from the Domestic Abuse Unit have worked successfully with Saint Paul Intervention Project to encourage victim cooperation in prosecuting domestic abuse cases.
- Regular meetings have been held with the Courts, the Ramsey County Attorney, and law enforcement personnel to improve cooperation among these agencies when dealing with criminal cases.
- Because of an enhanced continuance for dismissal program in the criminal division, the CAO will generate additional revenues to support its current function and add revenues to the general fund.
- Because of the Mayor's commitment to the Community Prosecutor and Community Court Programs, the CAO has continued to operate these programs notwithstanding the lapsing of state grant funding for these programs.
- The CAO aggressively attacked a 90 day back log on cases in Community Court and brought it current. Today, defendants are given a court date when the citation is issued, usually between two to three weeks out which is the shortest time the District Court can process them.
- Notwithstanding the Community Prosecutor's full-time commitment to his assignment in the trial unit, he continues to meet with district councils and other community groups, including the Mayor's quality-of-life meetings, in the evening hours.
- Assisted the Mayor's Office and City Council on a project to increase the parking fines. This project resulted in additional revenue to the City's general fund.

2004 Priorities

- Continue providing outstanding legal services to the Mayor, the City Council, and City departments on housing, development, licensing, zoning, labor, and other governmental operations.
- Continue training prosecutors to improve effectiveness and efficiency through inter-office opportunities with prosecutors from other cities.
- Revise office policies dealing with charging decisions to ensure efficient and uniform screening of cases.
- Ensure that all victims and witnesses are contacted and informed of their rights.
- Work with Traffic Violations Bureau to improve prosecution of traffic violators.
- Work with Ramsey County to strengthen the Community Prosecution program and find creative ways to solve livability crimes.
- Strengthen the Joint Prosecution Unit to help break the cycle of violence in families.
- Work toward diversifying the office to reflect the community we serve.
- Review all litigation resolved during 2002 and prepare close-out memos to departments with suggestions for reducing the likelihood of similar suits.
- Work diligently to keep the Community Court cases current and if additional resources become available, expand the Community Court Prosecutor function to permit her to meet with her constituents outside of court regarding quality-of-life issues.
- If additional resources become available, work to expand the Community Prosecutor's role beyond Frogtown and Eastside, to the Westside and North End.

City Attorney

DEPARTMENT/OFFICE DIRECTOR: MANUEL J. CERVANTES

	2001 2ND PRIOR EXP & ENC *	2002 LAST YEAR EXP & ENC *	2003 ADOPTED BUDGET	2004 MAYOR'S PROPOSED	2004 COUNCIL ADOPTED	ADOPTED CHANGE FROM MAYOR'S 2003 PROPOSED ADOPTED
<u>SPENDING APPROPRIATIONS</u>						
001 GENERAL FUND	4,465,423	4,680,208	5,004,436	5,177,975	5,177,975	173,539
025 CITY ATTORNEY:OUTSIDE SERVICES FU	753,317	794,986	794,553	844,415	909,746	115,193
TOTAL SPENDING BY UNIT	5,218,740	5,475,194	5,798,989	6,022,390	6,087,721	288,732
<u>SPENDING BY MAJOR OBJECT</u>						
SALARIES	3,455,067	3,719,960	4,114,389	4,222,822	4,268,778	154,389
EMPLOYER FRINGE BENEFITS	1,058,047	1,147,736	1,217,548	1,342,209	1,357,184	139,636
SERVICES	512,883	433,181	376,962	385,044	389,444	12,482
MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES	83,322	72,317	72,290	72,315	72,315	25
MISC TRANSFER CONTINGENCY ETC	77,539	102,000				
DEBT						
STREET SEWER BRIDGE ETC IMPROVEMENT						
EQUIPMENT LAND AND BUILDINGS	31,882		17,800			17,800-
TOTAL SPENDING BY OBJECT	5,218,740	5,475,194	5,798,989	6,022,390	6,087,721	288,732
		4.9 %	5.9 %	3.9 %	1.1 %	5.0 %
<u>FINANCING BY MAJOR OBJECT</u>						
GENERAL FUND	4,465,423	4,680,208	5,004,436	5,177,975	5,177,975	173,539
SPECIAL FUNDS						
TAXES						
LICENSES AND PERMITS						
INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVENUE	69,235	10,937-	54,000	76,728	76,728	22,728
FEES, SALES AND SERVICES	567,328	603,154	696,349	741,283	741,283	44,934
ENTERPRISE AND UTILITY REVENUE						
MISCELLANEOUS REVENUE						
TRANSFERS	60,116	65,196	26,404	26,404	26,404	
FUND BALANCES			17,800		65,331	47,531
TOTAL FINANCING BY OBJECT	5,162,102	5,337,621	5,798,989	6,022,390	6,087,721	288,732
		3.4 %	8.6 %	3.9 %	1.1 %	5.0 %

Budget Explanation

Major Changes in Spending and Financing

Creating the 2004 Budget Base

The 2003 adopted budget was adjusted to set the budget base for the year 2004. The permanent budget reductions made in early 2003 to cope with cutbacks in the State's local government aid payments for 2003 and beyond were annualized for 2004 and reflected in the base budget. In particular, the base budget for each department reflects the "round 1" mid-year budget adjustments as adopted by the City Council, and the "round 2" adjustments as proposed by the Mayor and awaiting council action at the time the 2004 budget planning process began. The budget was increased for the anticipated growth in 2004 for salaries and fringes for staff related to the bargaining process. Employee benefit cost increases were projected and then considered in the process that distributes those total costs to the City departments' budgets through the budget system using the "fringe rate" process. Finally a spending cap was imposed on the department's adjusted general fund budget to help meet the announced cutbacks in the State's 2004 local government aid funding.

Mayor's Recommendations

The Mayor recommends a total City Attorney Office budget of \$5,177,975 which is a 3.5% increase over the 2003 adopted budget. The proposed budget recognizes increased revenues of \$431,000 for prosecution surcharges, which were used to offset any reduction the office was initially assigned to make as well as some increased needs identified by the office.

The City Attorney's Office budget has been submitted reflecting the 2003 Round 1 and 2 reduction plans. In addition, this budget reflects the department's share of city-wide budget savings related to the continuation of the hiring freeze into 2004, and a slight cutback in support costs.

Council Actions

The City Council adopted the City Attorney budget and recommendations as proposed by the Mayor, and approved the following changes recommended by the Mayor:

- add \$65,331 for an associate attorney whose focus will be with the neighborhood communities..